

S E C R E T

12 October 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR:

STAT

SUBJECT: Comments on Mettler Panel on NIE

General Comments

1. The panel uniformly expressed the view that the approach used this year in writing the Soviet military NIEs is a significant step forward, not only in the manner of presentation, but also in the inclusion of the anti-Polaris problem in much greater detail. Several panel members seconded General Betts' view that the treatment this year gives the reader a much better feeling for what the situation is and for the basis of the conclusions which we draw.

2. The panel felt that the manner of presentation of what is known, the analysis of this, and the conclusions drawn from the analysis generally came through all right. The only place in which the panel seemed to feel that the subject has been

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slighted and the whole story not given in sufficient openness was the ASW part, especially on the Moskva sonar.

3. Ambassador Kohler specifically stated that, as a non-technical reader, he found the degree of detail and analysis not overpowering, and he believed the non-technical reader would find it both understandable and worthwhile to go through the detail. He generally agreed with the statements of Soviet policy concern.

4. Mr. Mettler felt that it was very important that the degree of detail in the estimate should be read by the policy maker, and even urged more detail in some places. He felt that the danger of too much detail was not nearly as great as the danger of a superficial approach; he intended to tell Mr. Helms and Mr. Kissinger that they should read and understand the detail, and was going to urge Mr. Helms to get top policy makers in the government to do likewise.

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ASW vs Polaris

1. The topic that elicited the most discussion was the problem of Soviet ASW capabilities against Polaris. Here comments revolved about the Moskva sonar, prediction of future Soviet ASW capabilities, and options open to US for reaction.

2. Admiral Levering Smith thought we did not make clear enough that the problem was in the future, and urged that we make clearer what our views were with regard to development of future ASW capabilities vs Polaris. Mr. Mettler urged that we wring out the factors that would enter into a future improvement in the Soviet capabilities against Polaris in the open ocean, and talk about our judgments with regard to them. Even if we had no information, he felt we should then indicate when and under what circumstances we might get some information.

3. Several members of the panel felt that the ASW part of the paper was not wrung out as well as the other parts. We should define what we mean by a quiet submarine in technical terms and what we mean by "at long ranges". Mr. Mettler urged a statement on satellite ASW sensors. Mr. Nitze wanted better

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statements on the possibility of effective US evasive action. Admiral Smith wanted more specific details of our analysis of the Moskva sonar, giving the key points of our analysis in more clear focus, and specifically saying under what conditions our judgments would hold.

4. Both Mr. Mettler and Admiral Smith urged some discussion of the problem of technological breakthrough in the ASW field. They together agreed upon the wording of the general judgment. "There is an infinitesimal, but finite, possibility of technological breakthrough in an area of overwhelming importance."

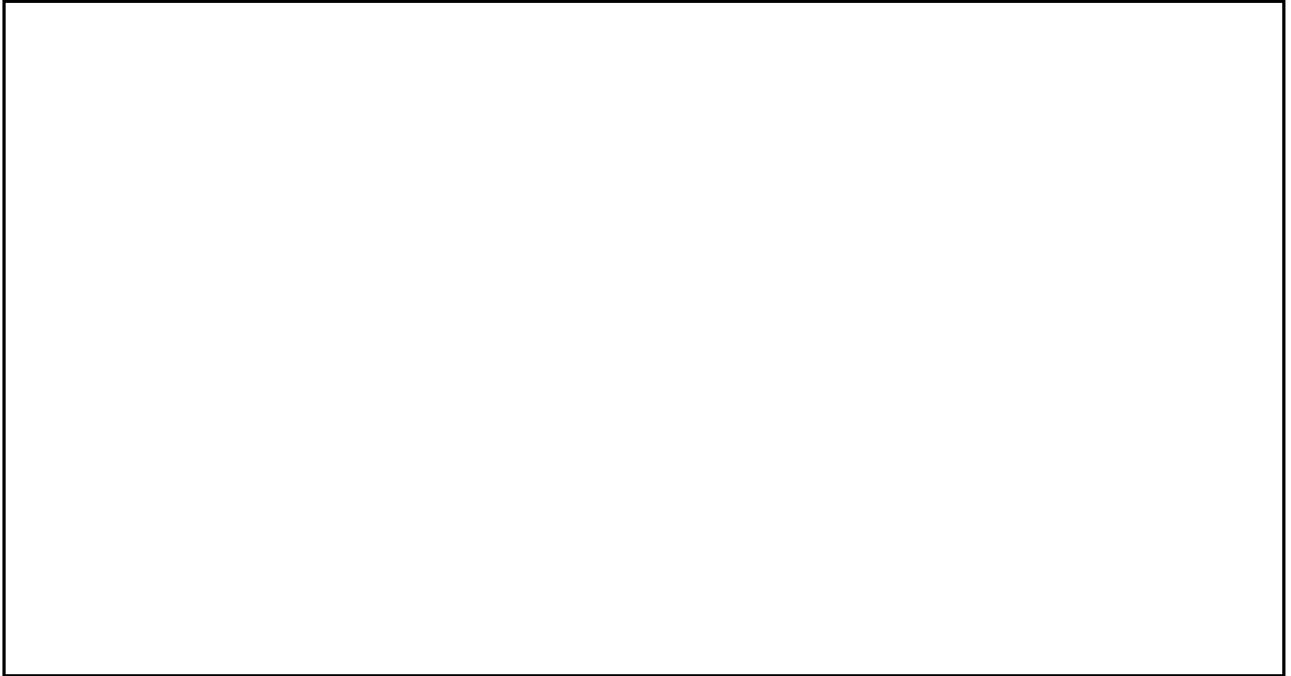
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Other Topics

1. Mr. Nitze felt that the civil defense section was weak, and had not given a "hard look" at the problem of evacuation times, especially in light of a Poseidon attack.



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3. Mr. Mettler thought that the question of Soviet doctrine concerning launch on warning should be handled somewhere in either NIE 11-8 or NIE 11-3; it was "conspicuous by its absence"

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thought we should have given more discussion to the conditions of international tension in which they would seek to interfere.

Members of Strategic Intelligence Panel Present:

Mr. Reuben F. Mettler, Chairman
President, TRW Systems Group

Lt. Gen. Austin W. Betts
Chief, Research and Development, Department of the Army

Lt. Gen. John W. O'Neill
Deputy Commander, Air Force Systems Command

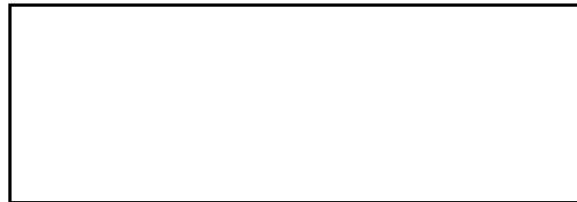
Hon. Paul Nitze

Rear Adm. Levering Smith
Technical Director, Special Projects Office, Department of the Navy

Mr. Carl Haussman
Associate Director, Lawrence Radiation Laboratory, Livermore

Also Present:

Mr. Fred Wikner
Net Technical Assessments, DDR&E, Department of Defense



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